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## OXFORD DEMOCRAT,

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PROMPTLY AND NEATLY EXECUTED.

## EDUCATION.

### The Teacher's Mission.

A POEM.

Read before the Oxford County Teachers' Association,

at its meeting in Buckfield, Jan. 6, '49.

What is the Teacher's Mission? anxiously

I asked, as deep in thought I pondered o'er

The ends and aims of human life. I knew

That not one life is useless, but that each

Fulfills the purpose for which he was made.

Design marks all the Universe, for God

Unto each end has shaped the needed means.

What is the Teacher's Mission? Surely he

Was not created in vain, but God has shaped

His end from the beginning—given to him

An humble path to tread in, reaching up

To the blest portals of Eternal Rest.

Lonely and trembling he has labored on, [each

Poor school boy, as with rod and rule he tried

To beat proud Science into youthful brains;

The best of every tongue, the man despised

And trodden down. 'Tis time he strove to take

His place among his fellows; time he learned

His noble duty, and with burning tongue

Of eloquence, and action's louder voice,

Declared his rights and his nobility.

'Tis time the citizens of his own State,

And our wide glorious Union, knew their friend,

Their true friend, he who leads the minds

Of children to that font in whose clear wave

The wisdom of all nations concentrates.

See! that happy time, long looked for, long

Desired, whose first faint dawn gleamed years ago,

Now bursts in glory on our dazzled eyes.

Behold this band of youthful heroes and

Of maidens fair, convened from Oxford's hills,

Ragged and bleak, and from their fertile vales,

Made musical with joyous flow of waves

Upon their brows sit bright Intelligence,

Strong Will out-dashes from their every eye,

And the quick play of features, shows their minds

Keen to perceive, and glad to realize.

And these are Teachers, who from parts remote

Leaving behind their daily round of care,

Are met to cheer each other's weary way,

To bear each other's heavy burdens, and

Exchange the precious gems of holy thought.

Yes, these are Teachers. O, if all could see

This noble band, well might our County hope

For brighter days in store, and glory in

Their might, the might of educated mind,

Strong in its own deep consciousness of power.

Their mission is a holy one, more high

Than kings' upon their thrones, or statesmen's in

Their halls legislative; for their work lasts

Throughout the countless ages of all time.

Minds awakened here shall slumber never more,

And impulses received effect our course

Throughout eternal years—long after kings'

And statesmen's laws are with forgotten things.

They are not called to simply teach the lore

Of books, the ponderous globe, and all its store;

Of minerals and earths, its varied kinds

Of vegetation, with its myriad tribes

Of animated life, and wondrous air

Pervading all and life-sustaining, are

But minor things, for they endure for but

A day, a moment of eternal time.

And Mathematics in its mighty range,

And grim Philosophy that puzzles brains

Keener than children have, with ancient thoughts,

Deep hid by weight of languages long dead,

Not simply of what kings and nobles did,

And how the people labored, but shall show

By other's lives, how we must spend our days,

That peace and joy may be our heritage.

So all the studies of the schools must be

The tools by which the teacher, patiently,

Shapes children's beings, as the sculptor forms,

With various art and long-protracted toil,

The perfect image from the marble block.

Nor is this all. The teacher of our days,

Must govern too his little band, and how

Shall it be done? By the strong power of his

Own despot will, shall hurtful passions be

Chained into peace? Like wild beasts must they

Cowering with fear, and trembling with dismay,

And meditating vengeance, deep and fierce?

It will not do. The passions were not given

To be destroyed, but to be directed right:

The will must not be broken, but be bent

From obstinate resistance, to that power,

That steadfast perseverance, that o'ergoes

All hindrances to reach its destined goal.

O, rather let him, if he would confer

Upon the minds of those beneath his care,

A panacea for the ills of life,

An anchor to sustain them, 'mid the storms,

And adverse winds and waves, on life's wide sea,

Teach them self-government, the point whereon

The soul is poised, that with true dignity,

They may conduct as best becometh men.

This then his Mission: To unfold the mind

By every means, to wake its slumbering powers,

And lead its dormant faculties to act.

This, this, ye teachers, Oxford's present pride

And hope for future days, this is your task.

For this, O struggle on, and nobly toil,

Forgetting as you pass, your rugged way,

In the sweat flowers that nestle at your feet,

And in the glorious beauty of the sea

Your upward steps must reach. O labor on,

Nor with such noble ends in view, permit

One thought of faltering to rise within

Your breasts. O, never ask, with heaving sigh,

When will the day of rest arise for me.

Man is the only being God has formed,

That asks for rest, when want with iron will

Bids him to toil. The sun his light sheds down,

Unceasingly, the planets in their course

Wheel on without delay, the growing things

Of earth never pause, and even beasts perform

Their labor with a ready will. Shall ye,

Raised high above them all, (for mind is far

Above all matter,) meanly wish to shun

All labor, and in quiet ignorance,

Drag out your useless days. No, for you're placed

On earth, for labor not for rest; and he

Who best performs earth's duties, nearest comes

To the perfection which ye strive to gain.

Teachers of Oxford, nobly struggle on,

Raise high your standard, and with steady will

Approach yourselves unto it. Then shall you,

Far more than now become the parent's trust,

And truest friend, and our wide nation own

You are its noblest citizens. Perform

Your Mission with unfaltering faith, with pure

And perfect singleness of heart, and God,

Who faithfully rewardeth all who toil,

Will surely be your strength and your support.

The Teacher's Reward.

Read before the Oxford County Teachers' Association,

at its meeting in Buckfield, Jan. 6, '49.

Much has been thought and said in relation

To this all-important subject, still the public are

far from realizing its importance. Their attention

is too much directed to the more material

necessities of life, while the director of the mind,

the immortal mind, passes as a mere cipher in

society, being regarded as a sort of drone, who

has no cares, no trials or perplexities. Now we,

as a friend to this neglected class, would ask if

these thoughts are just—if they are worthy a

place in the human heart? First, let us enter

one of our common schools. How many different

dispositions do we here find, which to please,

requires the greatest mental exertion? Who is

to settle all disturbances, and smile at petty an-

noyances? Who, whether merry or sad, is still

to wear the outward semblance of joy and glad-

ness? Who is to guide the infant mind, step

by step, and day by day along the path of know-

ledge? Who labors incessantly to keep up an

interest, without which nothing is accomplished?

Questions innumerable suggest themselves to the

candid, reflecting mind, and we can but hope

that all the friends of education (and who is not

a friend?) will awake—and bestir themselves

in this great cause. The time has come when

the mere art of reading and writing are but the

elements, the starting points of education. In

former times if a child could read "tolerably

well," and write a "decent hand," why that was

sufficient. Now, more is required, the duties of

Teachers are increased in more than tenfold

proportion, and yet their reward is barely suf-

ficient to satisfy the ordinary wants of life. Is

this right? Ought these things to be? Hun-

manity, protesting her innocence, loudly appeals

for a reformation; and, let us all reflect upon

the matter seriously and conscientiously. One

of our rulers made this sage remark, "that what

ever tended to raise our primary schools, pro-

moted the public good." Here then is the

"root of all evil." Our primary schools are in-

deed neglected. And why? Simply because the

remuneration arising therefrom is incompe-

tent to enable one to educate himself as the law

requires. The common operatives in our fac-

ories much prefer their mode of life to that of

teaching, and their reward, so far as pecuniary

affairs are concerned, is double that of the

Teacher of a common district school. Thither

attention turned, and talent is buried in the

confusion of the loom.

To Teachers I would say, go on in your no-

ble, god-like work. A pure heart, and the con-

sciousness of having done your duty, by eman-

cipating the immortal mind from the mazes of

superstition and ignorance, will yield that peace

and consolation which the world can neither

give nor take away.

To the public let me add one suggestion, if

propriety admit. Be careful in selecting Teach-

ers, and whom you do select, faithfully reward.

Z. W. B.

## THE DYING VOLUNTEER.

AN INCIDENT OF MOLINO DEL REY.

BY H. G. CHIPMAN.

The sun had risen in all his glorious majesty,

and hung above the eastern horizon like a ball

of glowing fire. Its bright rays danced merrily

along the Lake of Texaco; over the glittering

domes of the city of Mexico; past the dark frown-

ing battlements of Chapultepec castle, and lit, in

all their glorious effulgence, upon the blood-stain-

ed field of Molino del Rey.

The contest was over, the sounds of the battle

had died away, save an occasional shot from the

distant artillery of the castle, or the fire of some

straggling riflemen.

I was standing beside the battered remains of

the mill door, above which the first footing had

been gained upon the well contested wall, and

gazing over the plain, now saturated with the

blood of my fellow soldiers, which that morning

had waved green with flowing grass, when I

heard a low and feeble wail, in the ditch beside

me. I turned towards the spot and beheld, with

his right leg shattered by a cannon ball, a vol-

unteer lying amid the mangled dead. He had

been passed by in the haste of the gathering up

the wounded under the fire from the castle, and

the rays of the burning sun beat down with ter-

rible fervor upon his wounded limb, causing heavy

groans to issue from his pallid lips, and his

marred countenance to writhe with pain.

"Water, for God's sake, a drink of water,"

he faintly articulated, as I bent down beside

him.

Fortunately I had procured a canteen of wa-

ter, and placing it to his lips, he took a long,

deep draught, and then sank back exhausted up-

on the ground.

"The sun," he murmured, "it is killing me by

its rays; cannot you carry me into the shade?"

"I can procure assistance, and have you taken

to the hospital?"

"No, do not, my sands of life are almost out.

An hour hence I shall be a dead man. Carry

me into the shade of the mill, and then, if you

have time to spare, listen to my dying words;

'Perhaps I can engage it for the second set?'

I calmly asked.

"Mr. P. has engaged it for the whole evening,"

she pettishly replied, and rising and taking his

hand, they took their station upon the floor.

I remained thunderstruck, and rooted to the

spot, until I saw the eyes of my hated rival

fixed upon me, and throwing off the spell that

bound me, I assumed a proud, cold look, and

passed from the hall. As I swept by the dan-

cers, Eveline paused a moment when just beside

me, and bending close to her ear, I whispered,

"Eveline, farewell for ever."

"She turned slightly pale, and then answered,

"When?"

"To-night, I join the army for Mexico," I firm-

ly replied.

A deep flush passed haughtily across her brow,

and then waving her hand gracefully, she repli-

ed, "Go," and again glided through the mazes of

the dance.











